

It will be noted that the French citation states that Lieutenant Smith was wounded twice, and that the American citation states that he was wounded three times. These statements reflect the confusion of battle and that following Lieutenant Smith's capture by the Germans. From later reports by participants in the action the fact has developed that Lieutenant Smith received five wounds during the engagement. The following report of the action gathered from participants recounts one of the most brilliant episodes of the closing days of the war.

On Saturday, November 9th, 1918, the 81st Division began a drive on the German positions near Haudimont, France. Company D, of the 318th Machine Gun Battalion, moved forward in support of the 1st Battalion of the 324th Infantry. Of this company Lieutenant Smith commanded the first platoon. After a desperate all-day fight, Saturday night Lieut. Smith attached the only machine gun left in his platoon and four other guns from other platoons of his company to what was left of a company of infantry. The party then numbered twenty-five men of Lieut. Smith's company and forty infantrymen, together with two captains and a lieutenant. At the time they were three miles inside the German position. There they captured a large concrete machine gun emplacement and being separated from the battalion in a seemingly impenetrable forest filled with mines, wire entanglements, and every known device of hell, they stayed there through the night.

Sunday morning two companies of Germans, numbering five hundred men, discovered them and attacked their position. Death or capture seemed inevitable. The Americans fought desperately. In the course of the fight, the two captains, the lieutenant, and twenty men made their escape, while Lieutenant Smith and a member of his company, a New York ex-policeman, Murphy, each operating a machine gun, successfully covered their get-away, choosing themselves to face certain death or capture in order that their comrades might gain their way to freedom. Lieutenant Smith and Murphy fought their guns against overwhelming odds until all their ammunition was exhausted. They then joined the infantrymen who were fighting with automatic rifles and grenades. When the German called on the Americans to "throw up their hands," Lieutenant Smith, though severely wounded, refused, but the German officers, declaring he was too brave a man to be killed, made him a prisoner and showed him every possible attention, sending him to a base hospital in Metz.

In this fight, Lieutenant Smith received five wounds--on cheek, hand, knee, foot, and thigh. After the signing of the armistice on the 11th, four German officers came over to the American lines full of praise for the bravery of the little garrison and for their gallant lieutenant.

Lieutenant Smith was one of the first Raleigh boys to go to the officers' training camp at Fort Oglethorpe. He was commissioned second lieutenant in, August 1917, and promoted to first lieutenant January 1, 1918. After receiving his commission he was sent to Camp Jackson and later to Camp Hancock, in both of which he was instructor in machine gun schools. In August, 1918, he was assigned to Company D, 318 Machine Gun Battalion, of the Wildcat Division, and sent to France, where he took part in every battle in which the division participated. From September 29 to 12 o'clock November 10, when he was captured, he was continuously in action.

Lieutenant Smith, a son of Dr. Charles Lee Smith of Raleigh, is a graduate of the University of North Carolina of the class of 1916, and had been out of college less than a year when he joined the colors.